

# The Distinctive Features of the Prophet's (S) Companions

The lives of the Prophet's (S) companions [*sahābah*] are the finest examples available to the Muslims. When Allah's Prophet (S) began propagating the divine message and instructing individuals in Islamic precepts, the first outcome and fruit of his undertakings was that a group of men and women with conviction and devotion believed in him.

It is these early believers who, during and after the lifetime of the Noble Prophet (S), made strenuous efforts to spread and disseminate the divine message of Islam. They sacrificed their lives and properties for the sacred goals of Allah's Prophet (S).

The Noble Qur'an states about them,

***“Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah, and those with him are firm of heart against the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, seeking grace and pleasure from Allah; their marks are in their faces because of the effect of prostration; that is their description in the Tawrah and their description in the Injil; like a seed-produce that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it, so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the unbelievers on account of them; Allah has promised those among them who believe and do good, forgiveness and a great reward.”***<sup>1</sup>

In another verse, it states,

***“Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant which they made with Allah.”***<sup>2</sup>

Whenever these people heard the Prophet (S) inviting them to Islam, they readily declared, “*Labbayk yā Rasūlillāh*” (Here I am, O Prophet of Allah!) and consistently said,

***“Our Lord! Surely we have heard a preacher calling to the faith, saying: Believe in your Lord, so we did believe; Our Lord! Forgive us therefore our faults, and conceal our evil deeds and make***

### ***us die with the righteous.*** <sup>3</sup>

The Prophet's (S) companions and comrades are the first people in whose hearts the tree of faith was initially planted. This tree soon matured and after a short period of time, bore very diverse, nutritious and palatable fruit. In the circumstances of their lives, moral attainments and human virtues thrived, until a group among them became living symbols of piety, virtue, self-sacrifice, devotion, patience, endurance, love, affection, high ambition and motivation.

This group of companions possessed an intense longing to meet Allah. The adornment of their hearts was a 'rejection of attachment to this transient world'. The world was enlightened with their radiant light.

However, we can not overlook the fact that not all of the Prophet's (S) companions were endowed with the same fine human attributes in the course of their lives. According to the testimony of the Noble Qur'an, there were double-tongued hypocrites amongst them who were inclined to polytheism and had weak faith.

Therefore, merely being one of the Prophet's (S) companions can never be a sign or proof of attainment of lofty moral values; of being a just person or having a high social status among the Muslims.

We cannot accept everyone's words, nor approve of their actions just because they happen to be one of the Prophet's (S) companions. If these people had internalized the training given to them by such a great teacher as Allah's Prophet (S), they would not have dared be disobedient or commit any unjust act. People who received spiritual instruction possessed high moral values and valuable attributes.

However, we cannot disregard the destructive effects of the carnal or sensual desires because they strongly neutralize the effects of spiritual training and take man back to the Age of Ignorance [*Jahiliyyah*]. It is for this reason that we cannot pass the same verdict on all of the Prophet's (S) companions [*sahabah*]. On the contrary, careful attention has to be paid to their words and deeds. Only then can we judge them fairly.

<sup>1</sup>. Sūrat al-Fāth 48:29.

<sup>2</sup>. Sūrat al-Ahzāb 33:23.

<sup>3</sup>. Sūrat al-Imrān 3:193.

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